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ABSTRACT

Primarily concerned about women's need for child care, this position paper also mirrors the state and needs of families, communities, and the Nation as well. The number of employed mothers in the U.S. exceeds 12 million. The goal of the Day Care and Child Development Council of America is to promote the development of a locally controlled, publicly sponsored, universally available child care system through public education, social action, and assistance to local communities. Special consideration must be given the situations which involve employed women and their children, particularly as this relates to day care, for the most rapid increase in labor force participation in the past decade has occurred among mothers of children under six. If the number of working mothers of children under the age of six increases at the same rate between 1970 and 1975 as between 1965 and 1970, about a million additional working mothers will be struggling to arrange for adequate child care. Child care can become the institution for the re-education of men, women and children, and it is the women primarily who must undertake the work of building these new institutions. It is proposed that a system of child care is only possible to the extent that constituencies are organized from the grassroots to the top and a coalition is developed in the next four years that transcends class, race, and sex. The plan involves the centers and their staff, coordinating bodies, women's organizations, unions, and industry. (DB)

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The Woman Question in Child Care

(A Position Paper)

PS 006599

Prepared by
The Day Care and Child Development Council
of America, Inc.

DAY CARE & CHILD DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL OF AMERICA, INC.
1401 K STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

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"If the intelligence is the only true and rational basis of government, it follows that that is the best government which draws its life and power from the largest sources of wisdom, energy, and goodness at its command. The force of this reasoning would be easily comprehended and readily assented to in any case involving the employment of physical strength. We should all see the folly and madness of attempting to accomplish with a part what could only be done with the united strength of the whole."

Frederick Douglass
(on "women's rights")

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1
foreword

Since the beginning of mankind there have been groupings of women, men, and children from whom families and communities have emanated, and by whom the economic, social, educational and political characters of these communities were shaped. In the early periods, women and men contributed equally to the functioning of their families and societies.

Roles changed as technology advanced, and women moved from their role as vital, contributing members of the economy and accepted that of surpluses to that economy. Family function took on such characteristics that units were no longer working together in harmony for a common good of families and communities, but were sucked up into individualistic struggles for economic advancement or merely a limited survival.

Women of our world today have been lost and/or distorted in the vital process of building families, communities and socieities in which they live, and have become mere tools used to stabilize an economy. Some of us (men and women) have become conscious of this and demand liberation of the vital female half of the world.

The Council supports this thrust for liberation and believes that it will be achieved via several avenues. *Child care is one of the most essential,* for not only is it a source of development for the children; it also frees women to become productive contributors to a process which will facilitate the development of themselves, their families, communities and country.

Thus, although primarily concerned about our women's need for child care, this position paper has emerged as a mirror of the state and needs of our families, communities, and country as well.

It is presented as a challenge to child care advocates, male and female, across the country, a challenge which we hope will see the gearing up of resources, directions and minds, for the task which lies ahead in the coming four years.

The Council offers this challenge to those who have the courage to join the struggle to insure within the next four years the emergence of a universal comprehensive child care system as part of the services that our government(s) provides to its people.

Mamie Moore

Associate Director
Minority and Women Affairs

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introduction

For one newly exposed to the topic of child care, it would seem that there have never been services such as day care publicly provided for anyone except welfare families, and that this type of service was given for the first time within the past decade.

On the contrary

> full-day care programs, as contrasted to half-day nursery schools, have been provided in periods of economic stress—during World War II and the Depression when women were required in the work force. These programs were created primarily as a service to the corporations which needed woman-power, not as an educational and social opportunity for children. Although wartime day care centers often became educational opportunities for children, their rapid closing following World War II was a clear indication that these centers had not been organized primarily to benefit children or even to liberate women. Rather they had been organized to facilitate the carrying out of needed production.[1]

Recent times have once again seen the women of our nation attracting similar attention by virtue of the movement highlighting the oppression of women. The national attention given to child care has become more pronounced by President Nixon's veto of a comprehensive child care bill in 1971. This situation received attention primarily on the presidential charge that passage of the bill "would commit the vast moral authority of the National Government to the side of communal approaches to child rearing over against the family-centered approach".[2]

1. Elsie Adams & Mary Brisco, UP AGAINST THE WALL MOTHER (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1972) p. 269.
2. Office of the President, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AMENDMENT OF 1971-VETO MESSAGE (H. DOC. NO 92-48) (1971).

However, the history of this bill had some longevity and its full impact can only be understood when placed in its proper framework.

This framework can most adequately be described by a statement from a recent study in child care with a subsequent report emanating from the National Council of Jewish Women under the direction of Mary Dublin Keyserling, former Director of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

> Six million children under the age of six have working mothers. Most of them work for compelling economic reasons. About a million of the children whose mothers are employed are in poverty; another million are in families living close to the poverty line. Most of the families of these two million children would be on welfare if their mothers weren't earners. Only a very small percentage of the children whose mothers are employed now benefit from developmental day care services. The large majority are cared for in their own homes or the homes of others and most of them receive only custodial care. Well under ten percent are enrolled in licensed day care centers. Of the centers visited by NCJW members, only about a quarter provided developmental care including educational, nutritional and health services, the essential components of quality care. Survey participants found that there are too many children of working mothers who are grossly neglected; latch-key children on their own, children who went with their mothers to their places of work because no other arrangements could be made for them, children in day care centers and homes of such poor quality that the children may suffer lasting injury. The first five years of a child's life are the period of the most rapid mental, personality and physical growth. Deprivation in the early years can have disastrous effects. The number of children of working mothers in need of care has been rising considerably, more rapidly than the supply of services available.[3]

It is now common knowledge that the number of employed mothers in the U.S. exceeds twelve million. The employment of women at once breaks up the family—the so-called "compact American family" portrayed on radio and TV which projects a false and idealized image. Basically, realistically, a family is a group comprised of one or more adults and one or more children, all of whom share (a) a common shelter, (b) a common thrust for survival. Whatever more we may wish for such a group, such as productive interdependence with its community, the basic individualized survival level is where every family in America currently finds a common definition. The NCJW report continues: "most mothers of little children work because of economic pressures. Facts reveal that where the husband's income is less than $7,000, thirty-six percent of the wives were in the labor force. Twenty-one percent from families in which the husband earned ten thousand or more worked."[4]

To make the point more clearly: The projection of women in the work force and the important part that our women play in the process of production outside the household actually creates a new economic foundation for a higher form of family functioning and relationships between men and women. Real (as opposed to idealized) families will only be "disrupted" by women's employment if inflexible and destructive social forms act adversely upon them.

3. Mary Dublin Keyserling, WINDOWS ON DAY CARE (New York, 1971).
4. Ibid., p. 12.

Therefore, most certainly, it demands a serious effort in our country to alleviate the crisis in families of working women and change the oftentimes dangerous and destructive situations into which children of these families are placed.

Cognizant of this crisis, the Day Care and Child Development Council of America believes that quality child care services are a right:

- of every child
- of every parent
- of every community.

The goal of the Day Care and Child Development Council of America is to promote the development of a locally controlled, publicly supported, universally available child care system through: PUBLIC EDUCATION—to mobilize public opinion and resources in support of children's programs. SOCIAL ACTION—to assist in formulating public policies which will result in well-planned, adequately funded, and well administered programs responsive to local needs and aspirations. ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES—to help citizen action groups and service agencies meet their community needs. Society is obligated to support the realization of human potential. Thus, child care services are a fundamental right for:

THE CHILD—they provide children with opportunities to develop their full capacity as human beings during their crucial early years. THE FAMILY—they provide parents with real choices about employment and other activities outside the home. THE COMMUNITY—they provide one of the essential elements for improving the quality of life of the community.

WE BELIEVE that America needs a coordinated network of child care and development services which:

- are available to children of all ages from conception through youth, to families from every kind of economic and social background and to every community, with priority to those whose need is greatest.
- are available through a wide variety of different types of programs and during all of the hours of the day and time of the year that children, families and communities need them.
- have the full range of components required to promote the intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth of the children they serve.
- insure parents a decisive policy role in the planning, operation and evaluation of programs which determine the environment in which their children live.
- place the major responsibility for planning and operating child care and development services at the local level.
- reflect and build on the culture and language of children, families and communities being served and enhance the distinctive features of the child's culture.

WE BELIEVE that child care services should be publicly supported. The financing of quality child care services is a costly undertaking but the most prudent of long-term investments. The nation's priorities must be reordered to provide the resources necessary for universal services.

WE BELIEVE that child care services should be a public, social utility whose cost must be shared by the entire community much as we now pay for essential police, fire and public school services.

Photo by Michael Sullivan

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Women, the family and the social order

The oppression of women across this globe has been highlighted for the past hundred years. In the more recent period we have seen it reach a peak unknown in our history. Although the movement has taken on tones more directed towards economics and racism among the poor, working poor and minorities, women of the upper income levels also suffer from this oppression in the form of social, educational and political "retardation."

It is the position of many of the Black, Puerto Rican and Chicano and Indian women that their history or condition cannot be written into one block as herein described. Given that the cultural evolutions of women of these groups take different cultural directions however, the question of their economic conditions emanates from a society with one economic system. We, therefore, see that women of all races suffer from this economic system, and are to one degree or another victims of its oppressive tactics. In many cases, minority women are used as tools against economic development for women of the White race. It is important to the struggle for liberation that we recognize this approach to separation or divisiveness which prevents us from dealing unitedly with a common element of oppression.

Whatever our cultural setting, given this exclusion of women, we live in a society which is unable to reap the benefits of having every person (man, woman and child) an equal contributiong member, helping to build, shape and mold the direction to meet the needs of a total people. We are not able, at this point, to define our society as one which has as its focus development of conditions which nurture ***human*** development at all levels.

Within the United States there exists a dichotomy around the question of the roles of women: the traditional and obsolete ideology that women and children belong in the home versus the economic necessity which finds four million women with preschool children in the work force.

> For mothers, there is naked anger that in a society which gives lip service to family life they are forced by economic pressure to give up the full time mothering to which they feel committed . . .
>
> For still other mothers, the opportunity to work provides a personally satisfying way to actualize their own potential, to provide economic resources for their family and to make significant contributions.
>
> All families with working mothers share a common concern, how to provide their children with wholesome care while parents are at work.[5]

Given the nature of this situation, what are the conditions for families, in particular for women and their children? To answer this question, it is important for us to be able objectively and realistically to examine more closely the picture of the family and its relationship to its children.

In his veto message of the Comprehensive Head Start Child Development bill in 1971, President Nixon stated that "there is a respectable school of opinion that this legislation would lead toward altering the family relationship, (that it) would commit the vast moral authority of the National government to the side of communal approaches to child rearing over against the family centered approach."

We are of the opinion that this position of the President was based upon the standards of the affluent and ultrarich family, or the industrialist family which he supports. However, even here, there has not existed a real "family-centered" approach to child rearing. Everyone knows that this family has always had nurses, camps for the summer, boarding schools for the winter, and in between housekeepers or a governess to mind its children. Secondly, the women of these families, stripped of roles as productive members to the economy, have no avenue for continued development. Thirdly, the children, experiencing the contradictions of altered roles, become victims of confusion.

The situation of the poor, working poor and working families with median incomes (of all races, ethnic groups) is distinctly different. The circumstances of economics which force both parents to move into the labor market create the conditions which destroy the family: alternating shifts of work which find fathers working days, mothers evenings, and both passing each other like ships in the night. Pressures of work produce substandard incomes making it impossible to meet economic needs of families, discourage and dishearten mother, father and children to the extent that there are domestic quarrels and the inability to fulfill domestic duties to their satisfaction. There are the worries about whether or not there will be enough money for the next meal—a job found tomorrow.

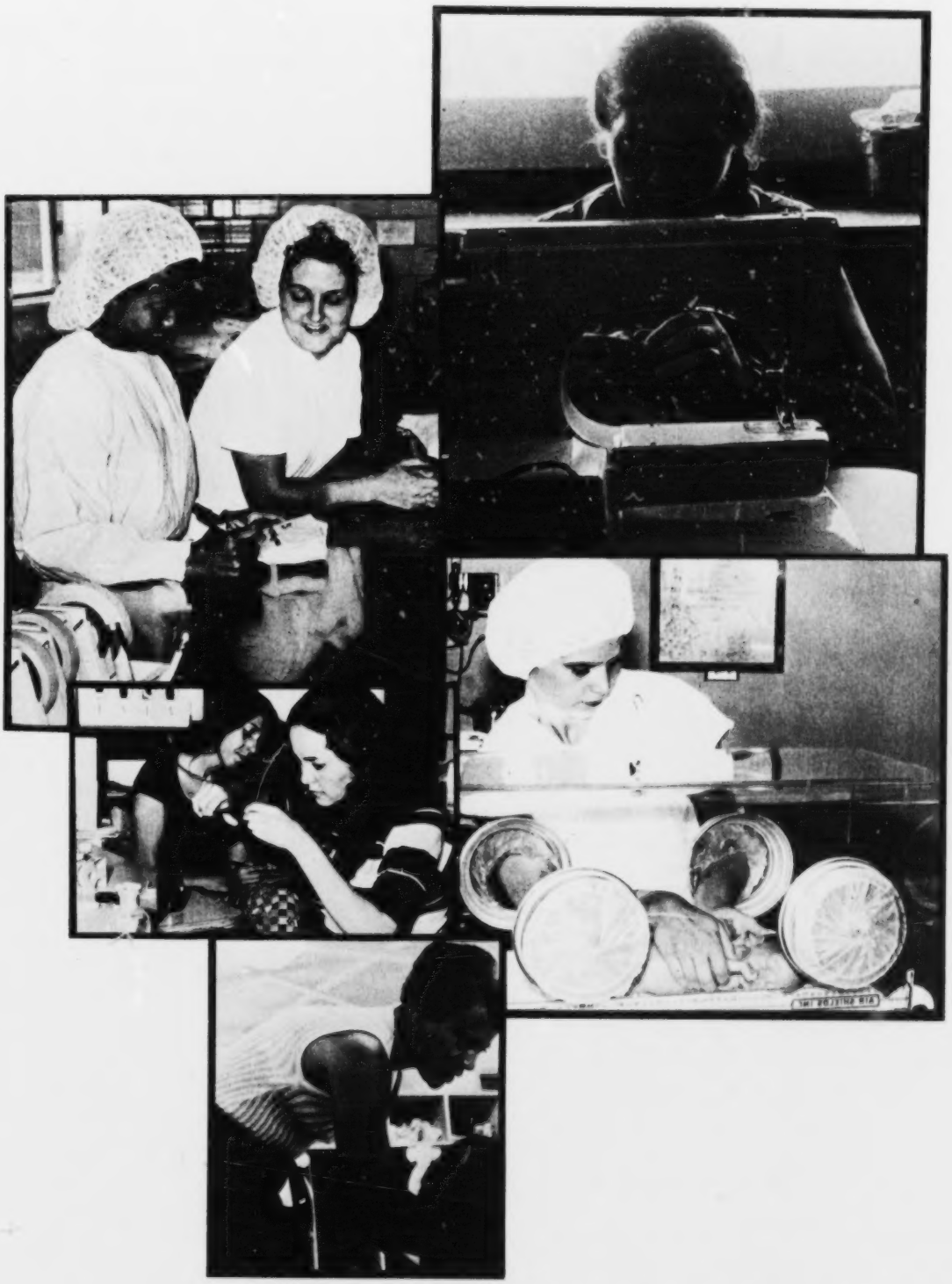
Conditions of single women at any economic level create double problems for parent and child, for not only must they bear the weight of family economics, the must also provide an avenue for interaction with their children. CERTAINLY NO ROSY TELEVISION DREAM FOR THIS FAMILY IN ANY WAY, FORM OR FASHION. In sum, the existence of a family in which members are (1) able to enjoy equal male-female relationships, (2) have children and enjoy raising them, (3) gain knowledge, (4) do creative work, (5) participate equally in the development of their communities and country and (6) just enjoy life without suffering and disadvantage is difficult if not impossible to attain.

It gets down to the fact that the social order renders family life almost impossible for the poor, working poor and middle American and certainly contradictory for the affluent. The children and parents of all these families stand the chance of becoming dregs on our society rather than productive members. In the

5. Sargent Shriver, THE FAMILY (Lansing, Michigan, 1972). p. 3.

face of these facts, the presidential position on day care becomes elitist clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relationship of parent and child, based upon faulty assumption and fantasy.

THE FACT IS THAT WITH ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT OR SURVIVAL PLACING RIGID DEMANDS ON FAMILIES, ALL TIES ARE TORN ASUNDER: CHILDREN AND PARENTS ARE TRANSFORMED INTO SIMPLE ARTICLES OF COMMERCE AND INSTRUMENTS OF LABOR. OUR WOMEN, BY VIRTUE OF RELEGATION TO SECOND CLASS CITIZENSHIP, FORM ONE OF THE GROUPS TO SUFFER MOST UNDER THIS SYSTEM.



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women and the labor force

Special consideration must be given the situations which involve employed women and their children, particularly as this relates to day care, for the most rapid increase in labor force participation in the past decade has occurred among mothers of children under six.

"This group showed a gain in labor market participation of over 60 percent during the past decade, with the result that now almost one-third of such mothers work. Women now account for 37 percent of all workers; approximately one out of two adult women are in the labor force. Most women who work are married and most of these married women workers have children. About one out of three women with children under six are at work."[6]

About 32 million women are in the labor force; they constitute 38 percent of all workers. Minority women in the labor force number 4.1 million; they constitute 44 percent of all minority workers.

About 3 out of 10 Black families are headed by a woman; almost 3 out of 5 poor Black families are headed by a woman.

Fifty-six percent of all Black women workers are not covered by Fair Labor Standards Act.[7]

Among the 4 million women of minority races who were workers in March 1971, slightly more than half (51%) were single, divorced, widowed, or separated from their husbands, and nearly a fifth (18%) were wives whose husbands had 1970 incomes below $5,000. In fact, only 20% of all women workers of minority races were wives whose husbands had incomes of $7,000 or more.

About a fourth of all women family heads were Black: the median family income of such families in 1970 was $3,576, as compared with $5,754 for families headed by a White woman.[8]

6. Robert W. Smuts, WOMEN AND WORK IN AMERICA (New York, 1971) p. IX.
7. U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Women's Bureau, "20 Facts on Women Workers" (Washington, D.C.).
8. U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Women's Bureau, "Why Women Work" (Washington, D.C.).

Add to this picture of an overwhelming force of women at work expectation that there will be vast expansions in the coming years based upon: (1) mandatory work provisions for welfare recipients (Talmadge Amendment—WIN); (2) passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act which prohibits discrimination in employment, (3) the thrust of the women's movement which is demanding equal opportunities for men and women of a family to participate in active parenthood and gainful employment; (4) the increased manpower needs and consumer demands of our growing economy.

In essence, we have a situation that has created an economy which is more and more dependent upon the productivity of women:

> The United States is far down the road where women will once again be closely involved—as they were in agricultural societies—in the production of goods and services.[9]

The subsequent increased female participation in the work force has not been paralleled by increased availability of child care services (day care, after-school care, 24 hour care, infant care). As a result, we are now facing a widening gap between the number of children of employed mothers and the number of available child care services.

> As of July 1969, there were 22 million children aged 5 and under. In 1969, there were 4.5 million children under 5 years of age with mothers in the labor force. It has been estimated that day care in licensed centers and family homes is available for only about 640,000 children. It has also been estimated that those who need such services total 8 to 10 times that number. In addition, there is a great need for after-school day care programs for children of school age.[10]

The inconsistency of this scene is aggravated by the lackadaisical attitude of employers in all categories towards the needs of the women they employ. Some even remain totally oblivious to the problems surrounding the conditions in which women must place their children while at work. In addition, the relegation of the majority of women to occupations in business and industry which pay low-level wages prevents even the purchase of satisfactory child care.[11]

9. Ibid., p. XVI.
10. U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, DAY CARE SERVICES: INDUSTRY'S INVOLVEMENT (Washington, 1971), p. 6.
11. Smuts, WOMEN AND WORK IN AMERICA, p. V—XVI.

5

child care as a liberating force

The controversy over the movement for a comprehensive child care bill has begun to generate the misconception that day care and child development advocates, feminists and others are out to "sovietize" our children (or to replace home education with social education). Certainly, to examine logically the basis for the thrust for child care, we must look more broadly than this, beyond the rhetoric of scare tactics.

The first place to raise the question of the effect of child care is clearly within the area of education itself. For the past 100 to 150 years, the people of the United States have relegated the education of their children from the ages of five through eighteen to "parent substitutes"—i.e., they have involved them in a form of social education. With this approach, children's education is determined by the social conditions under which we educate, by the intervention of society directly or indirectly: by the public educational system. Certainly, this has not allowed for an influential role for parents in determining their children's education.

What in fact the comprehensive child care advocates are about is the juxtapostion of possibly restricted efforts in home education with a social education which *includes* parental influence *prior* to the traditional public school age.

> Group child care, in contrast to the more isolating private home environment, has the potential of providing an environment in which children will have more opportunity to develop social sensitivity and responsibility, emotional autonomy and thrust, and a wider range of intellectual interests.[12]
>
> According to Margaret Mead, crosscultural studies suggest that adjustment leading to a productive life is most facilitated if the child is cared for by many warm, friendly people, so long as there is continuity with a mothering person (1954)[13]

12. Adams, UP AGAINST THE WALL MOTHER, p. 271.

13. Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc. A COMPILATION OF ARTICLES FOR CHILD CARE REPRINTS VOLUME I (Washington, 1970), p. 19.

Photo by Michael Sullivan

Working families are beginning to demand care services, not so that they can take time out for elaborate vacations, but because they must work. Without this type of supportive service, the family in real truth will be broken up inevitably, for with the lack of child care facilities, many of these children will end up at very early ages in the streets, in detention homes, on drugs, and then in prison. (It is important to note that the contradictory lives of affluent families provide the media for a similar fate for their children).

> The child's right to quality day care is not a panacea for all the problems families face, yet it should be viewed as part of the supportive community social services.[14]

Within the realm of the unemployed, there is a potential for the creation of a brand new and progressive work force:

> If the number of working mothers of children under the age of six increases at the same rate between 1970 and 1975 as between 1965 and 1970, about a million additional working mothers will be struggling to arrange for adequate child care.[15]

If there are not existing employment opportunities for these women, child care programs can become the vehicle for the creation of jobs.

> It is a known fact that a child care program serving 60 children is capable of providing employment for approximately 10-20 persons of professional and nonprofessional background. There exist within our communities students; unskilled, (and skilled) one parent families; ghetto and middle class addicts; people who are disenfranchised and have not found a means of becoming productive, contributing members of our society.
>
> There exist large numbers of unemployed, skilled, professional teachers (B.S., B.A., etc.) and they are the forces that we could draw upon to become the trainers and professionals for that child care work force.[16]

Within this spectrum of potential child care workers are women, men, elderly folk and teenagers, broad economic circumstances, educational background and racial make-up.

The child care programs themselves are only one avenue by which employment needs can be met. Programs utilize a vast array of supplies, materials and equipment: paper products, wood products, educational materials, chairs and tables, films, etc. Thus, there is the potential of increased industrial operation around the production of the resources which programs need to function, a shot in the arm to employment opportunities for women and men alike.

The thrust of women today for a social, economic, educational and political "freedom" is a proper thrust. Proper from the standpoint of broader questions than just woman's liberation. Accepted or not accepted, the situation in which we find ourselves in this country today is one in which oppression of women, children, minorities, poor, aged, etc., has become the usual rather than unusual. The acceptable, rather than unacceptable. The tolerated, rather than intolerable.

The woman who is confined to housework only, is crushed, strangled, stultified and degraded, because her role does not allow her to affect the economy of the world in which she lives, does not allow

14. Ibid., p. 19.
15. Keyserling, WINDOWS ON DAY CARE, p. 17.
16. Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc. MID-YEAR LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS, (Washington, 1972), p. 7-8.

her to participate as an economic equal with her mate. Movement of all women from the sterile, nonproductive role orientation of housewives is a must if we are to tap the wealth of talent and potential that lies within this force for the creation of a universally available, publicly supported, locally controlled, comprehensive system of child care and for the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

> As long as any women remain in servitude, no one can be liberated. 'Women's Liberation' is today not a reality but a goal. At present we are all, women and men . . . prostituting our bodies and minds in a culture which allows rich to exploit poor, white to exploit colored, men to exploit women. In demanding an end to the exploitation, women are rejecting a system which allows one group power over another group's destiny.[17]

This is not to say that the role of women within the home should be banned. It is to say that while this domestication of women lends itself to the perpetuation of systems of oppression of people, where women are cut off from being concerned about the ills of their society, we are obliged as a civilized nation of people to seek changes, for this is certainly a social illness.

Child care provides us with an opportunity for innovative means of correcting old social illnesses. Child care can become the institution for the re-education of men, women and children, and it is the women primarily who must undertake the work of building these new institutions. This done, women will begin to realize the transition of their position from one of "the second sex" or "weaker vessel" to that of productive equality. Child care is a means of doing away with the inferior status of women as mere instruments of production and as the coal tenders and keepers of the home fires.

17. Adams, UP AGAINST THE WALL MOTHER, p. XIX.

6
conclusion

The Tone of the Nation

The failure and shame of this nation in its neglect for its children and oppression of its women will be felt for many years to come. For not only did we fail to develop a system of child care, but the last legislative hope, the one single piece of federal legislation that was open-ended, the Title IV-A amendment to the Social Security Act, was closed out with a 2.5 billion dollar ceiling. Not only was it closed out, but it was tacked on to a revenue sharing bill which bought off mayors and governors, blinding them to the hoax that was played on both them and their people.

The governmental bodies of this nation, from the federal to the local levels, have turned their eyes not only from the child care needs of the nation, but from social services for all the people in need of them. They have begun to pit the American people against each other using an old approach: the deserving poor versus nondeserving poor; the work versus the nonwork ethnic, lazy niggers against the hard working Whites, and on and on.

The average American family (attempting to meet *its* needs for food, clothing, shelter, basic health care, etc.) is oblivious to the conditions of the truly needy within our country. More importantly, they are so caught up in a standard based on economics and materialistic orientations that they are unable to recognize the responsibilities of their government to assist them and those less fortunate than they in becoming equal recipients of the fruits of our society. Child care has been presented to them as a *welfare luxury*.

What a government does, or does not do, deeply affects every family within its jurisdiction.[18]

18. Shriver, THE FAMILY, p. 1.

Photo by Michael Sullivan

The poor and working poor who need child care are unable to become fully involved in this struggle at this point. They are unaware of child care as a right, immersed in attempts to survive or ignorant of the benefits that child care can reap for them, their children, total families, communities and country.

There are those from Congress, women's groups, civic organizations, welfare organizations, child care programs (providers and consumers), low middle and upper income, affluent, Black, White, Puerto Rican and ethnic groups of all descriptions who see the validity and necessity for a universally available child care system in order to develop women, men, children, communities and a nation. However, they too are hampered by weaknesses, some more serious than others:

1. Fragmentation of efforts (organizationally, racially, etc.)
2. Ego struggles over who will be the most important in the eyes of the administration in the field of child care.
3. Lack of resources to provide actual services or to carry out the tasks of providing assistance to needy child care units or to educate the American public to the crisis of its children.

Industry has only a passing interest in the availability of child care services to its thousands of workers, and unions of industry have been slow to place child care as one of the contract terms for better working conditions.

Women are the majority in all categories except that of government, but they have yet to walk to the forefront and take their rightful place as the leadership of this most vital issue confronting our nation, not only today but for many years to come.

What is to be done?

Some have charged that the legislators and lawmakers are confused and don't know what to do. Others say that the election of a different president would guarantee a system of comprehensive child care. We hold with neither point of view. We propose that a system of child care is only possible to the extent that we organize our constituencies from the grassroots to the top and develop in the next four years a coalition that transcends class, race, and sex into a movement second to none in this nation.

There will have to be some whose responsibility is to gather facts and information at the federal level and disseminate this information to the local community level. The staff, the parents, the paraprofessionals, the social workers, must carry the issue of child development and all that that means into every nook and cranny in this nation. We must do a massive campaign of raising the ideolgical level of our people to the extent that they will not tolerate another defeat of a bill or the cutback of services for their children and thus, the continued oppression of our women.

To the women specifically: Those who find their roles at home are satisfactory and fulfilling for them, must reexamine their position of isolation from the conditions of the world in which they live, for their children, families, and communities cannot escape the ramifications of a passive, sick society.

Those who are already a part of the women's thrust must examine the extent to which it transcends racial, economic and sexual barriers, and where they are found wanting, be bold enough to strike out for change.

Those who are in comfort, productively contributing to the economy of our country, and yet unprepared to address themselves to its weaknesses, must reexamine this position, for like an infection in one

part of your body which can infect the whole, where there is oppression of other women, you too stand to become (or already are) victims of the same oppression.

To those minority, poor, working poor and moderate income women who feel that the women's movement as it presently exists is not your cause, we say: ALL STRUGGLES AGAINST OPPRESSION ARE THE CAUSE OF THE OPPRESSED! Be bold enough to take the wealth of experience that your oppression has provided and mold this struggle so that its concern becomes truly representative of all oppressed peoples.

To the men: Examine your present position on the role of women as it is defined in our society. Where you find prejudices, struggle to change them. Where you have not been prepared to relate to the growing needs of women, be flexible enough to become a part of their struggle and accept their leadership.

THE PLAN

Consumers and Providers

Despite the cutbacks, we still have centers. Center directors must reassess their budgets to place as many people as their budgets will permit on community organization. Centers must educate their staffs and parents to the highest degree possible. They must know every statistic in the field of child development. They should know *why* day care, *how* day care, *what* day care, and *for whom* day care. They must develop the fullest level of consciousness possible around the issue of day care. This information must then be transferred to the community level, in PTA's coffee klotsches,. Time must be bought or won on television, radio, news ads and just plain over-the-back-yard-fence discussions.

Coordinating Bodies

Coordinating bodies such as 4-C's, day care and child development associations of all descriptions must begin to meet immediately to lay out plans for a long range projection, covering at least two years, that will provide: first, for a strong membership base, and second, for the development of local resources to employ one or more organizers. Such bodies should see their responsibility as forming an advance guard for the protection and the development of the local centers' staff and parents. They must develop ties with state bodies, including parents' organizations, and begin cultivating relationships with positive legislators and exposing (if educating fails) those whose negativism and backwardness is destructive to the cause. They should be engaged in the work of identifying funds and resources, both private and federal, and the integration of other services at the center level.

Women's Organizations

All women's organizations should move immediately to come together to discuss the questions of women in child care, and from that base lay out plans for a long range projection, covering at least two years, which would focus attention on

- politicizing organizational positions on the child care question;

- providing for an educational plan to begin to recruit women from minorities and working units for involvement in the struggle for child care;
- identifying resources which would enable hiring an organizer whose role, as a central person for all women's groups on the child care issue, would be to implement child care plans for education, T/A to local groups on the factors of women's needs in child care, movement with industries and/or unions to begin to educate them on the need for child care and begin to move them towards the evolution of such services; laying out plans for alliances with other organizations of minds on the question of child care.

Unions

Unions which have not already become involved in child care should move at their very next meeting to place this question on their agendas. Discussions should move to develop a plan towards establishing child care as part of the union negotiating terms. Where there is limited awareness of the issue of child care as it relates to the working mothers, plans should be made to conduct educational programs, lobbying efforts, surveys of workers to assess needs, etc. Specific goals in the area of child care should be laid out which include timetables for funding and establishing comprehensive child care services.

Industry

Industries should move immediately to assess child care needs among their employees, while at the same time gathering information on the manner in which they can participate in meeting this need. Employee meetings should be called to discuss this issue. This thrust should be in conjunction with the union membership so that there is a sharing of directions, needs, plans, etc. Where the need emerges as a critical one, definite plans (with timetables) should be established for the implementation of such supportive services.

Only when all these units, centers, coordinating bodies, women's organizations, unions and industries are able to comprehend the broader picture, to look beyond their own immediate interests, and to come together, willing to work cooperatively, can our goal of quality universally available child care be acutalized. Further, when that coalition becomes a reality, quality universally available child care and all its social and economic implications for women and men, their families, their communities, and their country, will be an inevitable result.

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